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Stark County Health Department to begin administering third dose for immunocompromised individuals on Tuesday, August 17; scheduling available on ArmorVax platform today

(Jackson Twp., OH) – On August 13, the Ohio Department of Health gave local providers the approval to administer a third dose of the mRNA vaccines to immunocompromised individuals based on approval from the FDA and CDC. The Stark County Health Department will begin administering third doses of only the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, to those meeting the eligibility listed below, tomorrow during the regularly scheduled clinic hours. Third doses of Moderna will not be offered at our department. Residents meeting the eligibility guidelines and having completed their second dose of the vaccination series 28 days ago, must schedule through [ArmorVax.com](https://armorvax.com), the ArmorVax mobile app or by calling 330.451.1681. Walk-ins will not be accepted at this time. There will be multiple local providers for residents to receive their third dose from in case the department's appointment availability fills up.

These additional doses for immunocompromised persons should not be confused with booster doses. At this time, additional booster doses are not authorized or recommended for any individuals based upon waning immunity over time. The need for and timing of a COVID-19 booster dose have not been established, according to the FDA.

The CDC has further defined this eligible population to include:

- Individuals undergoing active treatment for cancer (solid tumor and hematologic malignancies).
- Individuals who have received a solid-organ transplant and are taking immunosuppressive therapy.
- Individuals who have received a CAR-T-cell or hematopoietic stem cell transplant (within two years of transplant or taking immunosuppression therapy).
- Individuals with moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (e.g., DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome).
- Individuals with advanced or untreated HIV infection.
- Individuals undergoing active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids (i.e., ≥ 20 mg prednisone or equivalent per day), alkylating agents, antimetabolites, transplant-related immunosuppressive drugs, cancer chemotherapeutic agents classified as severely immunosuppressive, tumor-necrosis (TNF) blockers, and other biologic agents that are immunosuppressive or immunomodulatory.

“We continue our fight against COVID-19 and its variants. This extra dose will help those immunocompromised individuals who are at heightened risk for serious outcomes from COVID-19,” said Health Commissioner Kirkland Norris, RS, MPH.

The Ohio Department of Health has said that the purpose of the additional dose is to strengthen the immune response when the initial immune response to the primary two-dose vaccine series is likely to be insufficient, according to the CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). This additional dose is recommended **at least 28 days following completion of the primary vaccination series** for qualifying immunocompromised individuals age 12 and older who have received the Pfizer series and individuals age 18 and older who have received the Moderna series, according to the CDC’s updated clinical considerations for COVID-19 vaccinations. At this time, an additional dose is not recommended after the single-dose Johnson & Johnson (Janssen vaccine). Further evaluation and guidance specific to the Johnson & Johnson vaccine is pending, according to the CDC panel.

“These vaccines are our best defense against COVID-19 and its variants. It is important to remember that these vaccines have gone through the same safety process as any other vaccine. No corners were cut but more efforts were put towards finding a solution to this virus,” said Norris.

Residents wanting to schedule an appointment (those 12 years of age and older) can schedule through [ArmorVax.com](https://armorvax.com) and on the mobile app for [Apple](#) and [Android](#) devices. Those that are minors, 12 to 17 year old’s, must be accompanied by their parent or legal guardian to their vaccine appointment. The parent or legal guardian must sign a consent form upon checking in at the clinics. However, those that do not have access to a computer, internet or who have difficulty using ArmorVax, may still call the registration phone line at 330.451.1681 to schedule an appointment.

“We encourage all those meeting the eligibility guidelines to receive their third dose of the vaccine for further assurance that your immune system can fight the virus if you are infected,” said Norris.

The Stark County Combined General Health District (Stark County Health Department) was founded in 1920 and is celebrating a century of health. The department is currently the ninth largest health district in the State of Ohio which serves the public health needs of over 250,000 people. The jurisdiction of the Stark County District is that of the 17 Townships, 12 Villages, and the cities of Louisville, North Canton, and Canal Fulton. The mission of the department is to assess, protect, promote, and improve the health of Stark County through leadership, quality service, and community partnerships.

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